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Proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005

Programme 4
Peaceful uses of outer space

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Overall orientation

4.1 The overall purpose of the programme is the promotion of peaceful uses of space science and technology for economic, social and scientific development. The need for international cooperation in space activities and the importance of using outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes were first recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution 1348 (XIII) of 13 December 1958. By its resolution 1472 (XIV) of 12 December 1959, the Assembly established the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The direction of the programme is provided in resolutions of the Assembly and decisions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Legal Subcommittee and Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and their subsidiary bodies. Recommendations of particular relevance for the work to be undertaken under this programme are contained in the resolution entitled "The Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development", adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), held in Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999, and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 54/68 of 6 December 1999.

4.2 In that Declaration, the importance of space science and space applications was recognized for the fundamental knowledge of the universe, education, health, environmental monitoring, management of natural resources, disaster management, meteorological forecasting and climate modelling, satellite navigation and communications, and other major contributions of space science and technology to the well-being of humanity and specifically to economic, social and cultural development.

Objective

4.3 The objective of the programme is to facilitate the use of space science and technology in solving problems of regional or global significance with emphasis on its application for sustainable development.

Strategy

4.4 Within the Secretariat, substantive responsibility for the programme is vested in the Office for Outer Space Affairs. The overall strategy in meeting the objective of the programme is based on the need for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and would be implemented by the Office through the provision of assistance to and collaboration with Member States, in particular developing countries, organizations within the United Nations system, national and international space-related organizations and the private sector in the areas of space science and technology.

4.5 The Office for Outer Space Affairs will provide parliamentary services, including the preparation of analytical studies on emerging scientific and technical as well as legal and policy issues in support of intergovernmental negotiations, to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including its Legal Subcommittee and Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and their subsidiary bodies, which serve as a focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. The Office will also serve as the focal point for coordination of space-related activities among the organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations.

4.6 The United Nations Programme on Space Applications will be implemented through capacity-building and outreach activities, technical assistance and dissemination of information related to peaceful uses of outer space. It will be expanded to include activities designed for young professionals and university students. Technical assistance will be provided to Member States, in particular developing countries, through advisory services in integrating space applications into development programmes. Capacity-building and outreach activities will be organized jointly with regional centres for space science and technology education affiliated with the United Nations. Cooperation between developed and developing countries, as well as among developing countries, in space science and technology will be enhanced and the capacities of developing countries in the applications of space technology will be strengthened through a better understanding of space technology and its utilization for social and economic development and development of human resources in space applications. Within the framework of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, a fellowship programme will provide individuals from developing countries with the opportunity to participate in workshops, expert meetings and training courses on various topics of space science and technology and its applications.

4.7 In accordance with the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the Office will maintain a public register of objects launched into outer space and disseminate information furnished by Member States. The Office will also maintain and improve the International Space Information Service (ISIS), which provides information on the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, activities of the Programme on Space Applications, access to satellite data and the international legal framework governing space activities, consisting of agreements and treaties, and declarations and legal principles.

Expected accomplishments

4.8 Expected accomplishments would include formulation and adoption of legal instruments and standards with respect to space-related activities; increased awareness in the international community, in particular among youth, of the effective application of space technology in economic, social and cultural development; and greater access by developing countries to space technology.

Indicators of achievement

4.9 Indicators of achievement would include:

(a) An increase in the number of States establishing national legislation and regulations concerning their space-related activities in conformity with the international legal framework governing outer space activities established by the United Nations;

(b) An increase in the number of new programmes and projects that include the use of space science and technology for economic and social development, in particular in developing countries;

(c) An increase in the number of space-related activities carried out through bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Legislative mandates

Programme 4
Peaceful uses of outer space

General Assembly resolutions

1472 (XIV)	International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space
1721 (XVI)	
2453 (XXIII)	
3235 (XXIX)	Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space
37/90	Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
54/67	International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space
54/68	Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space